

# ARNET'S • BECKER • BURRELL

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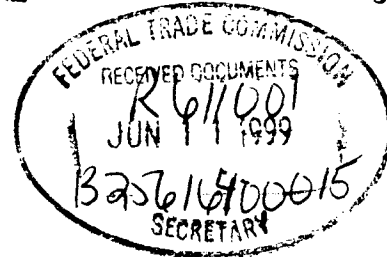
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ORIGINAL

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June 8, 1999



Secretary, Federal Trade Commission  
Room H-159, 600 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20580

Re: 16 CFR Part 453

As President of Arnet's Inc. (a retail monument company) I am extremely concerned with the changes occurring in the death care industry. The reason for my concern is the increase in abuse to the consumer.

Let's face it, the time we (those in the death care industry) have contact with the consumer is usually after they have experienced a death. It is criminal and disgusting how some of these customers are treated at such an awful time in their lives. Take a look at some of the situations that have been brought to my attention:

A young wife was not allowed to have the memorial she wished for her deceased husband. Why, because the Sexton (caretaker of the cemetery) decided he did not want it in his cemetery (even though all the surrounding memorials were different colors, sizes, shapes etc.) The customer could go to the cemetery board but why? The cemetery board is made up of the sexton's family. The customer decided to have her husband moved to another cemetery (very costly I might add). Where: Northview Cemetery, Dearborn, MI.

A mother who recently buried her son was badgered about buying a marker from the cemetery. But not until after she paid her final bill due for the purchase, opening, closing of the grave etc. which she was also badgered about. Where: Cadillac Memorial Gardens West, Westland, MI.

What about the many customers who are told that they must buy their memorials from the cemetery? The cemetery tells the customer that they won't be responsible for anything that happens to the memorial if they buy from someone else. To note: the cemetery prices are generally higher but the customer feels they have no choice but to purchase from the cemetery. Where: Grand Lawn, Detroit, MI, Lenawee Hills, Adrian, MI, Arborcrest Memorial Park, Ann Arbor, MI...etc.

And the outrageous charges for cemetery installation, fees, future care (whatever they want to call it). Recently, one of our customers was charged \$200.00 for the cemetery manager to watch my company do the installation of



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the memorial in the cemetery. Might this fee be inflated? Actual labor cost for one hour (which is also an unreasonable amount of time) should not be over \$60.00? Where: Arborcrest, Ann Arbor, MI, Washtenong Memorial Park, Ann Arbor, MI, Oakland Hills, Novi, MI, Woodmeor Cemetery, Detroit, MI...etc.

Cemeteries that require the cement foundation needed for under the memorial be purchased through them and the work has taken an unreasonable amount of time to complete. How about over a year... Who: Jim Wiegert, Bell Branch Cemetery, Redford, MI

Clarenceville Cemetery, Livonia, MI  
Farmington Cemetery, Farmington, MI  
Lakeview Cemetery, Whitmore Lake, MI  
St. Mary's Cemetery, Wayne, MI

Not receiving the memorial you purchased? Yep, some cemeteries are selling and not delivering. Where: Knollwood Cemetery, Ypsilanti, MI.

Although I prefer less government, I can hardly stand by and watch such abuse! Are we to allow others to "kick them while there down"? To idly watch as the vultures pick away at what is left of the human soul? Where has all the compassion gone? I beg of you, please give this some consideration.

To add insult to injury, most customers are emotionally exhausted and are willing to accept what has been done to them. They haven't the energy to fight the injustice that has occurred to them. Most of these people are simply doing what they can to get by in their day.

I am more than available for questions or comments regarding the many abuses that I have only begun to inform you of. I am beyond frustration but even more importantly, disappointed that this type of abuse occurs over and over again.

Sincerely,



Caryl J. Arnet  
President

CC: Monument Builders of North America, 3158 S. River Rd., Suite 224, Des Plaines, Illinois 60018

Eternal Justice, C/O Carolyn Jacobi, 3939 Dunes Way, Burtonsville, Maryland 20866